

other way and ignored the problem. That's precisely why we need to try a new, innovative approach like AgJOBS.

Q. How can you justify rewarding people who came here illegally by allowing them to become legal?

A. The only workers who apply for the adjustment program will be those who want to become law-abiding in every respect. They will have to register with the government and verify their continued employment. Their adjustment to legal status will be complete only after they earn it with continued, demanding labor in agriculture for the next 3-6 years. If an adjusting worker breaks other laws, he or she is out. The Adjustment Program would be there to benefit hard-working, known, trusted farm workers who did and will obey our laws in every other way. This is not a reward, but rehabilitation.

Q. Won't the promise of status adjustment encourage more illegal immigration?

A. Not in our AgJOBS bill. If someone wants to enter the United States to take advantage of our bill, they are already too late. To begin applying for adjustment, the worker must have been here before January 1, 2005—3 weeks before the bill was introduced—with a substantial record of work in agriculture. We are talking about stabilizing the current farm work force—working with persons who already are here.

Q. Why should agriculture get this special treatment?

A. That's the sector of our economy most impacted by illegal immigration. The crisis in agriculture must be addressed immediately—and it took us years just to get agreement between growers and labor, between key Republicans and Democrats, on this new approach. If AgJOBS works—and I believe it will—it will help us figure out how to solve the much bigger problem of an estimated million illegal aliens in this country.

Q. Illegal aliens have broken the law. Why not just round them up and deport them?

A. (1) We can't, as a practical matter. The official 2000 Census estimated that there are more than 8.7 million illegal aliens in the U.S. There are more today. That's the consequence of looking the other way for decades. Finding and forcibly removing all of them would make the War on Terrorism look cheap and would disrupt communities and work places to an extent most Americans simply wouldn't tolerate. If a law has failed, you can ignore it or fix it. Looking the other way only encourages more disrespect for the law. We need a new, innovative solution. AgJOBS is the pilot program.

(2) Up to 85 percent of all farm workers are here illegally. If we could round up and deport every illegal farm worker, that would be pretty much the end of American agriculture—the end of our safe, secure, home-grown food supply. That's how I first got involved in this issue, because agriculture is critical to the economy of Idaho—and the nation. We need to bring these workers out of the shadows, out of the underground economy, and turn them into law-abiding workers.

Q. Won't more illegals to sneak across the border, claim they were already here as farm workers, and abuse this new program?

A. Unlike the 1986 program—which was amnesty and was very different—our bill requires workers to provide documentary proof that they already were established here as farm workers—for example, tax records or employers' records.

Q. Once this wave of "adjusting workers" settle in, what's to prevent the demand for ANOTHER amnesty program in a few years?

A. Our bill would help stabilize the farm work force in the short term so that American farmers can adjust to the economy of the 21st Century for the long term. The Ad-

justment Program would give us the time we need to reform and significantly grow the other program in the bill, the H-2A Program, which employs legal, temporary "guest workers" who enter the U.S. only under government supervision and leave when the work is done. Because the H-2A Program has been broken for decades, there's been no effective vehicle for workers to come here legally to work in agriculture when domestic workers aren't available.

Q. Aren't these illegals stealing jobs from Americans?

A. I hear about that in other industries. I don't know that I've ever received one complaint from an American citizen who wanted to do the physically demanding labor of a migrant farm worker and felt an illegal alien had kept him or her out of that job. But I have heard from farmers who have gone out of business because they couldn't find a legal work force. This is why many of our legal visa programs are industry-specific—because the economy and labor markets are different for different industries. This is precisely the reason to try the AgJOBS solution in agriculture.

Q. How will this bill help us control our borders?

A. We can't possibly seal off thousands of miles of borders and coastlines. But we can control them better and improve our homeland security. Thousands of AgJOBS workers would be registered with, and in a job program supervised by, the Federal Government. This would be a major step forward toward a longer-term, more comprehensive solution.

Q. Who's going to pay for the medical bills and social services for adjusting workers?

A. Remember, in the AgJOBS Adjustment Program, we are talking only about workers who already are here, with substantial jobs in agriculture. So, AgJOBS does not add one bit to this burden. In fact, if anything, it starts helping to provide relief. When these workers gain legal status, they will be in a better position to earn more and do more to provide for themselves than they can today.

NEW ENGLAND APPLE COUNCIL INC.,
April 18, 2005.

Hon. SENATOR CRAIG,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR CRAIG: The New England Apple Council was formed more than 35 years ago, at the end of the Bracero program. Our 185 growers, me included, have used H2A workers or workers under previous programs for more than 50 years. The first foreign workers to come to New England to harvest crops were in 1943. Over the last decade we have been struggling to keep the H2A program working. I don't need to tell you the program is broken and in order for our growers to keep a legal workforce the program needs fixing.

I listened to Senators Sessions and Byrd speaking against Ag-Jobs on Friday and was extremely disturbed by what they were saying. They read from letters sent by a few associations and agents who are opposed to Ag-Jobs. The growers using the H2A program ARE IN FAVOR OF AG-JOBS!! Some associations and agents are not. Why? Because if we reform H2A so that it really works many growers will be able to use it without an association or agent. That's what H2A reform is all about, and we are in favor of it!! Workers who have held H2A jobs and meet the required days of employment will be rewarded for playing by the rules. Senator Sessions stated Friday that "only people who break the law will be rewarded", that is not true!! We have many workers who for many years, some since before 1986, have been coming yearly and going home at the end of their contract. Nationwide between 7 and 10% of

the adjusting workers will be those H2A workers who have obeyed the law, and they will finally be rewarded. Some agents and some associations see that as a bad move, which will cause disruption in the workforce, most growers say it's time to reward those workers who have obeyed the law.

As a longtime user of H2A workers and Executive Director of New England Apple Council and past President of the National Council of Agricultural employers I believe I have the feel of most agricultural employers in the United States. They are overwhelmingly in favor of Ag-Jobs. The Jamaica Central Labour Organization, which supplies most of the H2A workers to employers in the Northeast, is in favor of Ag-Jobs. The Association of Employers of Jamaican Workers, which I am Chairman of, supports Ag-Jobs. And lastly the 520 Organizations who signed the letter to congress sent on April 11th. Support Ag-Jobs. Please tell the Senate that an overwhelming number of the U.S. employers of H2A labor support Ag-Jobs.

Thank you for your support on this very difficult issue.

Sincerely,

JOHN YOUNG.

AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM,
Washington, DC, April 12, 2005.

Hon. LARRY CRAIG,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. CHRIS CANNON,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR CRAIG AND CONGRESSMAN CANNON: I would like to take this opportunity to commend you for the introduction of S. 1645 and H.R. 3142, "The Agricultural Job Opportunity, Benefits, and Security Act of 2005." The "AgJobs" bill is a great first step in bringing fundamental reform to our nation's broken immigration system.

AgJobs would make America more secure. 50 to 75 percent of the agricultural workforce in this country is underground due to highly-impractical worker quota restrictions. Up to 500,000 workers would be given approved worker status, screened by the Department of Homeland Security, and accounted for while they are here. Any future workers coming into America looking for agricultural work would be screened at the border, where malcontents can most easily be turned back.

The current H-2A agricultural worker program only supplies about 2-3 percent of the farm workforce. That means that the great majority of workers who pick our fruit and vegetables have never been through security screening. In a post-9/11 world, this is simply intolerable. Workers that are here to work in jobs native-born Americans are not willing to do must stay if food production is to remain adequate. However, those already here and new workers from overseas should have a screening system that works, both for our safety and for their human rights. Your bill does just that.

Sincerely,

GROVER G. NORQUIST,
President.

POTOMAC, MD, April 13, 2005.

Hon. LARRY CRAIG,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR CRAIG: History demonstrates that there are moments in time when special opportunities arise for political action that successfully addresses multiple challenges. Today is one of those occasions. The opportunity is Senator Larry Craig's AgJobs bill, S. 359.

News headlines are alerting American voters of concerns about our trade deficit,